

Seven Content Tips For Site Visitor Retention

By Mark Askew

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As you peruse your web site traffic logs over the past several weeks you may be quite pleased with the number of visitors who have come and gone. It is highly likely that if your hits number in the thousands by the end of the month your site or company name has come up in conversation a number of times. It is also likely that a visitor will remember having accessed your site at one time. What! Did I say "at one time"? Here lies our quandary. For one time visitors do not a buyer make.

To settle for one time visitors is the equivalent of settling for a cozy dinner by a warm fireplace near a cracked window. Your dinner goes cold and so does your dinner guest. Suddenly you're sitting there alone twiddling your frosted thumbs. With one time visitors it's the same story. The whole point in all your efforts to promote your product is going right out the window or the back door, never to return.

The most crucial factor to customer retention is that it usually takes several exposures of your product or service before a potential buyer decides to execute a sale. Unless the potential buyer has cause to return to your site and execute a purchase, you're likely marketing the product or service for the site where the potential customer actually makes the purchase. All your time and hard earned marketing dollars are wasted on your competitor's success! How do you overcome this dilemma?

Set Your Retention Standard

Fact is you should want your visitors to return to your site every day. But this is not likely to happen. Still you should set a standard as to the number of times a visitor could return to your site given the right incentives. User retention is as simple as putting these methods in place from the start. So what are the tried and true methods of keeping site visitors coming back?

A Long Hard Look At Content

First take a long hard look at your site. Imagine you were the visitor with an interest in your product or service. Perhaps the visitor is undecided as to whether they should choose your brand of product or service over someone else. What might they be looking for that would likely be an incentive to buying your wares? Is it being addressed in your ad? Now take a look at your more successful competitors site. Notice anything different? Perhaps a more effective approach in presenting the product. Notice the use of text and banner creative, etc. In most cases the key to user retention is found in the content itself.

Bottom line on Banner ads

The bottom line is, all things considered, text ads beat banner ads ten to one. Why? Because users

prefer to read content over seeing a commercial. Banners are considered commercials whereas text may have the appearance of useful content. But using text ads alone, however, may not invoke the user to making a purchase. Most text ads are not designed to inform but rather sell. Hard selling is a turn-off to the average user. Add to that the fact that many so-called “creative” is not very creative at all and therefore may not qualify as content. The ad may open with annoying and intellectually insulting bold capital letters and end with exclamation marks. Therefore, to make the best use of the better marketing medium of text ads, you will have to roll up your sleeves, loosen your collar and get down to work on an age old technique that will make your ads sell...true, reliable, informative, useful, content.

The Content Effect

The user needs to feel that they have been fortified to make an informed decision. Once they visit a site that appears well laid out with information regarding the product or service they are likely to bookmark the site for later use.

Solution is content. Not just any kind of content. Recyclable content or content a user will want to make use of again and again.

Some of the most useful forms of content that keep visitors coming back for more are:

- Daily news modules
- Tips, guides and recommendations.
- Helpful and informative tools
- Active discussions
- A list of upcoming events
- A list of current and updated product related topics
- Newsletters featuring daily news updates

A good example of the above can be found at <http://www.MortgageLoanSearch.cc> or <http://www.RefinanceLoanRates.com>

So take a long hard look at your site and that of the most successful competitors. Note the use of content and text ads. Set your own standard for user retention by making use of the above incentives to invite your customers to return. As your user retention rate rises and your revenue soars you'll see that the luring effect of content makes all the difference when using creative to market affiliate programs online.

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